

BALADEVA-TATTVA



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Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmīpāda wrote:

*rādhā-kṛṣṇa aiche sadā eka-i svarūpa
līlā-rasa āsvādite dhare dui-rūpa*

(*Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā* 4.98)

By svarūpa Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one, yet to relish the taste, the mellows, of pastimes, They have assumed two forms. Similarly, as Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are non-different from each other, Śrī Baladeva Prabhu is non-different from Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa Himself has become Baladeva Prabhu to relish so many ecstatic loving moods. “Keśava! Dhṛta-haladhara-rūpa! Jaya jagadīśa! Hare.” Keśava—Kṛṣṇa Himself, Śrī Brajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara, Gopīnātha, Rādhā-ramaṇa, Rādhā-kānta—has become Śrī Baladeva Prabhu.

In Vṛndāvana Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s original form is called svayaṁ-rūpa, and it has its svayaṁ-prakāśa manifestations. These svayaṁ-prakāśa manifestations are of two types: prābhava prakāśa and vaibhava prakāśa. When Kṛṣṇa is performing rāsa-līlā, standing next to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, He is svayaṁ-rūpa. And the Kṛṣṇa who dances with so many other gopīs is svayaṁ-prakāśa. When Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself in so many forms which are all identical to Him in mood and in appearance, that is called the prābhava-prakāśa aspect of svayaṁ-prakāśa. But when Kṛṣṇa manifests His own form with a slight variation in complexion or in mood, that manifestation is called vaibhava-prakāśa aspect of svayaṁ-prakāśa. This is the identity of Śrī Baladeva Prabhu. The vaibhava-prakāśa of Kṛṣṇa is not different from Kṛṣṇa, but has some speciality in complexion and mood. What is the speciality in complexion? Kṛṣṇa is śyāma colour and Baladeva Prabhu has a fair complexion. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has sevya-abhimāna—He is viṣaya vighraha—and Baladeva Prabhu has sevaka-abhimāna in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He wants to serve Kṛṣṇa in all ways.

When we examine the mood of Baladeva Prabhu, we see that He has saṅkula-rati. There are many different types of rati, or stayi-bhava. They are śrī-kṛṣṇa-visayini-rati—Kṛṣṇa is the object of that rati: śānta-rati, dāsyā-rati, sakhya-rati, vātsalya-rati and

mādhurya-rati. This rati has many types, such as mukhya-rati, gauṇa-rati, parārtha-rati, svārtha-rati. One kind is called saṅkula-rati. Saṅkula-rati is congested rati, meaning that more than one type of mukhya-rati is manifested at the same time. So the stayibhava of Śrī Baladeva Prabhu is saṅkula-rati, because in His heart His prominent mood toward Kṛṣṇa has a combination of dāsya, sakhya and also vātsalya mood because He is the older brother of Kṛṣṇa.

So Baladeva Prabhu has manifested in many ways in order to serve Kṛṣṇa. In Braja He is Rohiṇī-nandana Baladeva, but in Mathurā and Dvārakā He is Saṅkarṣaṇa, that is, Vasudeva-nandana or Devakī-nandana Baladeva. There He is called Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, and from this Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa comes Mahā Saṅkarṣaṇa, and from Mahā Saṅkarṣaṇa comes Mahā Viṣṇu, and from Mahā Viṣṇu comes Śeṣa. So in all of these ways Baladeva is serving. He is so eager to serve that He will serve in śānta-rasa in the form of the dhāma and the paraphernalia of all of Śeṣa-śāyi-tattva in the various realms of Braja, Mathurā, Dvārakā and Vaikuṇṭha. He is serving in dāsya-rasa, sakhya-rasa and vātsalya-rasa, and even in mādhurya-rasa He serves as Anaṅga Mañjarī. Baladeva Prabhu is so eager to serve Kṛṣṇa in all ways that He even becomes His paraphernalia and ornaments. In the form of the earrings on Kṛṣṇa's ears He is always affectionately kissing the cheeks of Kṛṣṇa. There is no end to Baladeva Prabhu's desire to render service to Kṛṣṇa.

Baladeva Prabhu has performed many pastimes, but one pastime is extremely difficult to understand. What is that? When Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvana and was staying in Dvārakā, Baladeva Prabhu came from Dvārakā to Braja-maṇḍala on a mission to pacify the separation feelings of the residents of Vṛndāvana. At that time Baladeva Prabhu went to Rāma Ghāṭa where He performed rāsa-līlā. Śrīla Gurudeva has asked me to tell why He did this. I will attempt to explain what I have heard from the lotus mouth of Śrīla Gurudeva. In addition Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has written a very extensive commentary on this subject in his ṭikā on Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata.

In Gītā Govinda Jayadeva Gosvāmīpāda has glorified Baladeva Prabhu:

vahasi vapuṣi viṣāde vasanam jaladābhaṁ

*hala-hati-bhīti-milita-yamunābham
keśava! dhṛta-haladhara-rūpa! jaya jagadīśa! hare*

When Baladeva Prabhu performed rāsa-līlā in Braja, He took His plough and summoned Yamunā, but she would not come. Baladeva Prabhu became angry and, taking His plough, began to drag Yamunā. You can see a big curve in the flow of Kālindī at that place called Rāma Ghāṭa. Śrīla Gurudeva, in his ṭīkā on Gītā Govinda, has explained that in this pastime Baladeva Prabhu is in the mood of dhīra-lalita-nāyaka. Why? Dhīra-lalita-nāyaka has some qualities:

*vidagdho nava-tāruṇyaḥ
parihāsa-viśāradaḥ
niścinto dhīra-lalitaḥ
syāt prāyaḥ preyasī-vaśaḥ*

(Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.230)

Especially *syāt prāyaḥ preyasī-vaśaḥ*—He is controlled by the love of His beloveds. In the incarnation of Lord Rāmacandra He has tolerated great separation and many problems for Himself and His beloved Sītā, because He is in the mood of dhīrodātta-nāyaka. But here Baladeva Prabhu is in the mood of dhīra-lalita-nāyaka. He is controlled by the mood of His beloveds; therefore He cannot tolerate even the slightest fatigue that they feel. In glorifying Baladeva Prabhu, Jayadeva Gosvāmī has expressed that Baladeva Prabhu wants to bring the whole Yamunā so that they will be refreshed and their fatigue will go away, because He cannot tolerate even the appearance of perspiration on the brow of His beloveds.

So why has Baladeva Prabhu performed this rāsa-līlā? Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has explained the identity of the gopīs with whom Baladeva Prabhu was dancing. This is a point of great controversy. I will try to explain the vicaras, the deliberations on the subject, one after another, and in the end present the viśeṣa vicāra, the special conclusion, of Śrīla Gurudeva. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura mentioned that at the time of Śaṅkhacuḍa-vadha, holi-līlā was going on at Govardhana. During that pastime some gopīs were standing very far away and were looking at Baladeva Prabhu. Kṛṣṇa Himself glanced at Baladeva Prabhu to indicate to Him that those gopīs had some special attachment for Baladeva. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura

commented that Baladeva Prabhu performed rāsa-līlā with those gopīs who were looking at Him. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has given another explanation. When Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvana for Mathurā, there were many gopīs in Braja who were not old enough to meet with Kṛṣṇa in rāsa-līlā. Later, when Baladeva Prabhu returned to Vṛndāvana, He did rāsa-līlā with them, fulfilling their desire now that they were old enough to take part in such a līlā.

These explanations have been give for loka-saṅgraha, for the general people who are in ignorance of rasa-tattva. They cannot understand what is rāsa-līlā and how Baladeva Prabhu can also perform rāsa-līlā with Kṛṣṇa's gopīs. Why does Baladeva Prabhu perform rāsa-līlā with Kṛṣṇa's gopīs? This is His service. Ordinarily in this world when the prākṛta nāyaka and nāyikā—the mundane hero and heroine—meet together, they do so for their own happiness and their own pleasure. But who is Baladeva Prabhu? He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is abhinna-prakāśa, non-different from Kṛṣṇa, but with sevaka abhimāna. He is composed entirely of sevaka abhimāna, the identification that He is Kṛṣṇa's servant. Therefore everything that He does is for the service of Kṛṣṇa. So if Baladeva Prabhu has performed rāsa-līlā with Kṛṣṇa's gopīs, the idea should never enter into the mind that Baladeva Prabhu has any bhoga-vṛtti, any enjoying tendency. He has done this for the sake of Kṛṣṇa's service in order to pacify the gopīs' separation.

There is another viśeṣa-vicāra, special deliberation. In this world if male and female will meet together and enjoy lusty activities, which are actually the cause of unlimited suffering, then this will be a great sin and they will have to go to hell. But we see that in the heavenly planets, the residents of Svarga—male and female—freely meet together to enjoy amorous pastimes, but they do not incur any sin. Why not? Because they do not have a gross body. Those who have a gross body will become entangled in sin by engaging in amorous affairs with many partners. But in Svarga-loka there is no restriction because the people have a different constitution. So in Svarga there is no sin in this. Then what to speak of the higher planets—Mahar-loka, Jana-loka, Tapa-loka and Satya-loka. And what to speak of beyond that—Ayodhyā, Dvārakā, Mathurā. And what to speak of Vraja! There cannot be any

insobriety, any impurity, in Baladeva Prabhu's meeting with Kṛṣṇa's gopīs.

Furthermore, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has given a very special deliberation on this subject. He explained that there are three types of prema: viveka-śūnya prema, viśrambha-prema and utkaṇṭhā-mayi prema. Viveka-śūnya prema means that love which is devoid of discrimination. This is seen in the trees and the cows of Vṛndāvana. When Kṛṣṇa left to go to Mathurā and Dvārakā, the cows and trees have no conception how long He had been gone. They do not know what day of the week it is, or whether Kṛṣṇa has been gone for one month, two months, three months, five years. They cannot discriminate. Furthermore, even when Kṛṣṇa was in Vṛndāvana, the trees did not see Him every day. One day He would go to Tālavana, another day to Kāmyavana, then to Vṛndāvana or Bhāṇḍira-vana. They would only see Kṛṣṇa from time to time. Those who have no discrimination cannot understand where Kṛṣṇa is going or when they will see Him again. So they may feel some separation but not so high.

The next type is called viśrambha-prema. This is found in the hearts of those who have sakhya-rasa. The sakhās feel great separation from Kṛṣṇa, and in that separation they even have sphūrti, vipralambha-visphūrti, and they see Kṛṣṇa. Yet those in sakhya-rasa will be satisfied by this sphūrti and will think, "Oh, Kṛṣṇa is here today. I have gone cow-grazing with Him." And they become so much satisfied with this sphūrti. In Śrī Gopāla-campu Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda explained that Kṛṣṇa sent a message from Dvārakā to the residents of Vṛndāvana saying, "I am going to Kurukṣetra. Those of you who are not satisfied with My sphūrti should come and meet Me there. The others should stay behind." So the husbands of the gopīs stayed behind and took care of Vraja along with the cowherd boys who had śraddhā in Kṛṣṇa's sphūrti-maya milana, that is, confidence in meeting with Kṛṣṇa in a vision.

The cowherd boys can be consoled somewhat, but those who have utkaṇṭhā-mayi prema—those situated in vātsalya-rasa and especially mādhyura-rasa—are full of eagerness. They cannot be pacified by anything at all. So when Baladeva Prabhu came to Vṛndāvana, He did rāsa-līlā with Kṛṣṇa's gopīs in order to pacify their

separation. What is this rāsa-līlā? It is not anything bad or immoral. Rāsa-līlā includes singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, van vihāra (wandering in the forest), jala-kṛīḍā (playing in the water), hiṇḍola-līlā (swing pastimes), and other such activities. These are the pastimes that Baladeva Prabhu performed with Kṛṣṇa's gopīs, thus trying to pacify their separation. For a moment their separation was pacified, but then immediately afterwards their separation increased more and more. The flames of separation went higher than ever before, and all gopīs were weeping in separation: *hā nātha ramaṇa preṣṭha kvāsi kvāsi mahā-bhujā*. “O Kṛṣṇa, where are You?”

When Baladeva saw that He was completely unable to appease the gopīs' sorrow, He Himself became overwhelmed in separation. He began to weep bitter tears and called out, “O Kṛṣṇa! O Kṛṣṇa! Why did You leave Vṛndāvana?” When Baladeva Prabhu was completely absorbed in separation from Kṛṣṇa, His complexion turned blackish. This is why here in Vraja Maṇḍala there are famous deities of Baladeva Prabhu—in Dāujī, Mahāvana, Madhuvana—that are black—to remind us of this very pastime.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura had explained that Baladeva manifested millions of forms upon seeing the very high separation of the gopīs. In each form He took one gopī to a kuñja, and then He cried out for Kṛṣṇa, “O Kṛṣṇa, please come to Vṛndāvana.” Then immediately, Kṛṣṇa manifested millions of forms and took the hand of each gopī and entered each kuñja where He fulfilled their hearts' desires to serve Him.

In this way we see that when the gopīs' separation was so high, Baladeva Prabhu called Kṛṣṇa, who appeared there at once. Therefore this is an example of how Baladeva Prabhu is akhaṇḍa guru-tattva. Why? Because when the disciple is doing sādhana-bhajana and serving His Gurudeva for a long time, his heart becomes purified and sambandha-jñāna is awakening. Then he becomes full of eagerness and in a desperate mood of separation he prays:

*vaiṣṇavera āvedane kṛṣṇa doyāmoya
e heno pāmara prati ha'bena sadoya*

Seeing the intense desire of his disciple, Śrī Gurudeva prays to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Then he invites the very sweet śrī vighraha of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala to manifest in the heart of the disciple. *Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto'pi*. There is no other method for success in spiritual life.

In this way we offer our śraddhā puṣpāñjali at the lotus feet of Śrī Baladeva Prabhu and pray to Him to sprinkle His mercy. Without the strength coming from Śrī Baladeva Prabhu in the form of His manifestation, Śrī Gurudeva, one can never become strong enough to get free from the clutches of māyā and become fully determined in the service of the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. *Hena nitāi vine bhāi, rādhā-kṛṣṇa pāite nāi.*

Gaura premānande!